



# 2005 Legislative Update

## 13th Legislative District

Toll-free legislative hotline: 1-800-562-6000



### Sen. Joyce Mulliken Republican Deputy Whip

115B Newhouse Building  
P.O. Box 40413 • Olympia, WA 98504-0413  
(360) 786-7624  
<http://www1.leg.wa.gov/Senate/SRC/Senators/Mulliken.htm>

#### *Sen. Mulliken committees:*

Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education  
Government Operations & Elections  
Transportation  
Water, Energy & Environment



### Rep. Janéa Holmquist

436 John L. O'Brien Bldg.  
P.O. Box 40600 • Olympia, WA 98504-0600  
(360) 786-7932  
[holmquis\\_ja@leg.wa.gov](mailto:holmquis_ja@leg.wa.gov)  
<http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/holmquist.htm>

#### *Rep. Holmquist committees:*

Housing (Ranking Minority Member)  
Capital Budget  
Economic Development, Agriculture & Trade

*Dear friends,*

*We are at a critical time in our state's history. When problems arise, they present us with the greatest opportunities to shine.*

*The challenges we have faced this session are in some ways familiar. Yet the motivations behind those challenges continue to evolve. It became quite clear from the majority party that this session was not about protecting small businesses; nor about lowering the costs of health care; nor about jobs and the economy; nor about protecting our farmers and private property rights.*

*In spite of these challenges, we have worked hard to bring your concerns to the public debate. We hope the issues in this newsletter encourage you, but at the same time motivate you to stay involved with your phone calls, letters, and e-mails to our offices.*

*Many of you have participated by offering testimony at public hearings in Olympia. You are an involved citizenry, and we both feel the weight of your opinions and ideas when making decisions in Olympia.*

*Thank you for the honor of allowing us to serve you!*

*In your service,*

*Joyce Janéa*

Sen. Joyce Mulliken

Rep. Janéa Holmquist

## 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

### Thank you to the troops!

A big thank you to all the men and women from the Army National Guard's 1161<sup>st</sup> Transportation Company out of Ephrata, the 116<sup>th</sup> Support Center based at Ellensburg's armory, the 737<sup>th</sup> Transportation Unit from Yakima, the 161<sup>st</sup> Infantry Battalion from Moses Lake, and all your family members! For the work you do, for the sacrifices you've made serving us all overseas . . . we owe you more than we can say!

## Democrat budget raises taxes and will lead to future deficits

Two years ago, when facing a \$2.8 billion dollar budget deficit, Republicans led the effort to craft a budget that focused on two things: setting and funding the priorities of the state without raising taxes, and placing the economy of our state at the front of each and every policy decision made.

We're seeing the effects of those good policy decisions now as state revenues are up over seven percent for this next biennium! Our unemployment numbers continue to fall and our economy continues to recover.

However, the two-year operating budgets proposed by Senate and House Democrats and the governor ALL relied in some way or another on a variety of tax increases. We're sorry to say the final version of the state's budget was no different.

In order to rectify their differences, the House and Senate went to a conference committee. This is when the two sides get together and hammer out their differences behind closed doors. But instead of prioritizing spending, or even

exercising a modicum of "give-and-take," they instead settled for just "take." The final budget spends even more money than either of the original House or Senate proposals! *You read it right.* The two sides got together and "bought" each other's "wants" instead of negotiating! And to top it off, no Republicans were included in the final negotiations!

The state's new two-year spending plan is \$25.962 billion. That's an almost 12 percent increase over the current two-year budget! How many of you received a 12 percent raise over the last two years? And here's something the media hasn't hit on yet; this budget increases total state employees (FTEs) by 2,843 (96,041 in 2005-07 versus 93,198 in 2003-05).

Also, Democrats passed legislation effectively killing Initiative 601, the voter-approved spending limit that has helped slow the rate of government spending. No Republican supported this measure as it goes against the very idea of government accountability and fiscal responsibility. The "tax-and-spend" mentality rules again!

In this budget, taxes are increased to nearly \$500 million, including:

- Death Tax (\$138.7 million) – Imposes a stand-alone death tax on non-farm estates and family-owned businesses valued at over \$1.5 million for people dying in 2005 and \$2 million thereafter (this goes directly against a recent ruling by the state Supreme Court). This is fundamentally wrong since



the monies earned by families is already taxed!

- Sales Tax on Extended Warranties (\$37.4 million) – This one is especially creative. It applies the state sales tax to consumer purchases of extended warranties. This is crazy! They are placing a tax on the customer's peace of mind!
- Liquor Liter Tax (\$49.7 million) – Imposes an additional per liter tax of \$1.33 for liquor store purchases, bringing the total state tax to \$3.77 per liter.
- Cigarette Tax (\$174.7 million) – Increases cigarette tax by 60 cents per pack, bringing the state's per-pack tax up to \$2.025.

And even though taxes are raised, we are guaranteed another billion-dollar budget deficit in two years because of budget gimmicks and the use of one-time money for ongoing expenses.

The Democrats say they "saved" money by not paying our legal obligations to the state's pension fund. But that's like saying you "saved" money by not paying your electrical bill. No, you didn't "save" money, you still have the bills coming due! And that's what this budget is: **it's a credit card budget.** It's putting off budget problems into the future. But that's a scary gamble because our economy is not something we should be betting on. Our taxpayers deserve far better!



*Rep. Janéa Holmquist speaks out against tax increases in the state's operating budget.*

## Capital budget: The state's "bricks and mortar" budget

The state's capital budget, often referred to as the construction budget or the "bricks and mortar" budget, allocates funds to maintain existing state-owned facilities including public schools, colleges and universities, parks and prisons.

The \$3.3 billion construction budget provides 24,400 jobs for Washington workers and builds much-needed facilities for Washington school children and college students. It has a positive effect on the local economy as local electricians, construction firms and laborers are hired to complete the work. We consider this budget an investment in our future, our kids, our workforce, our economy, and our quality of life.

Projects in the 13th District include:

### **Grant County**

Improvements to City of Warden's water system.....	\$1 million
Masquers Theatre, Soap Lake.....	\$145,000
Port of Ephrata Sewer/Roadway Improvement.....	\$289,000
Quincy Valley Historical Society (Reiman House).....	\$23,300
Big Bend Community College	
Performing Arts and Fine Arts.....	\$3.69 million
Aviation program fleet replacement.....	\$500,000
Heron Trail Phase 1 Boardwalk.....	\$342,318

### **Kittitas County**

Roslyn City Hall Renovation .....	\$150,000
Central Washington University	
Combined Utilities .....	\$4.4 million
Dean Hall Renovation .....	\$2.2 million
Minor Works Program .....	\$4.39 million
Facility Preservation .....	\$2.05 million
Health, Safety and Code Compliance.....	\$800,000
Infrastructure Preservation .....	\$1.1 million
Nicholas Pavilion Indoor Air/Asbestos.....	\$4.1 million
Preventive Facility Maintenance and Bldg. System Repairs .....	\$1.8 million
Iron Horse Park B Tunnel Inspection & Safety Repairs .....	\$210,000
Iron Horse Park B Mountain Bike Trail Development .....	\$345,000
Kittitas-Wildlife-Trust Land Transfer .....	\$4.11 million

### **Yakima County**

Roza-Sunnyside Board of Joint Control: Farm Irrigation	
Conservation Loan Program – Drought Relief.....	\$4 million
Selah Cliffs (WWRP Natural Areas).....	\$492,430
Yakima Valley Community College	
Glenn/Anthon Hall Replacement .....	\$28.6 M
Raymond Hall Renovation .....	\$4.16 M



## Transportation: More voter authority over one of the largest budget and employment sectors in state government

The Legislature passed a measure (ESB 5513) giving more voter authority over the Secretary of Transportation. The Washington State Department of Transportation is one of the largest budget and employment sectors in state government. But for years, the Secretary of Transportation was chosen by the Transportation Commission instead of being appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate like all other state agency heads.



Over the years, our transportation system has lacked real accountability because its top decision-makers were appointed, not elected. The new law provides direct transportation accountability through the governor – an elected official – instead of an appointed commission.

**If your civic group or community group would like more information on the transportation package that passed this session, please contact Sen. Mulliken.**



# 2005 Legislative Update

**Sen. Joyce Mulliken**  
**Rep. Janéa Holmquist**

## Health care - Addressing the crisis

The major driver of our health-care crisis is cost. The state's 49 health insurance mandates have made it too expensive for many employers to offer health insurance to workers and their families, even though they would like to. Some lawmakers are promoting policies that would incrementally lead us to government-run "socialized medicine" which costs more, delivers less, and changes the doctor-patient relationship to one between the patient and the state. We think that is the wrong approach.

The real answer to Washington's health-care crisis is addressing the problems that drive up the cost of medical care. We support the following:

- cost-containment reforms that include a mandate freeze;
- a cost-benefit analysis and reduction of mandates;
- small group insurance reforms;
- true medical malpractice reforms with reasonable caps;
- tax-free Health Savings Accounts.

### Our health care proposals

- **House Bill 2121 - Prime-sponsored by Rep. Holmquist** - This bill would have helped make health insurance more affordable for small businesses by allowing employers and employees to choose which benefits they would prefer. Compared to the current "Cadillac plan," this measure would allow coverage of at least 15 of the current 49 health insurance mandates. Rep. Holmquist will push for the bill again next year.
- **Senate Bill 5044 - Prime-sponsored by Sen. Mulliken** - This bill will help attract and retain the most qualified people to serve on the board of trustees of rural hospitals. Passed by the Legislature and signed into law.

## Election reform efforts

After the King County fiasco this past election, reforming our state's voting system has become a priority for the Legislature. Although some changes were made, more needs to be done to ensure an honest, accurate and fair election system. We support the following reforms and will continue to work to:

- **Eliminate voter fraud by requiring photo ID and proof of voter registration at the polls.** This has been the number-one solution recommended by constituents contacting our offices. It is our job to make the voting process secure and dependable.
- **Require all persons to re-register to vote.** We must clean up the voter rolls. Any election reform package that does not include a complete and mandatory re-registering requirement will only be a band-aid on the problem.
- **Require clear, concise instructions for our military and overseas voters and see to it they receive their ballots on time.**
- **Voter education – require high schools to teach citizenship classes.**
- **Prevent improper mixing of ballot types so provisional ballots can't be counted and lost in the mix before being validated.**

## Mattawa daycare

Several bills introduced by Sen. Mulliken to address the Mattawa daycare issue received public hearings this session. This brought the issue into the light with compelling testimonies. We discovered there were already laws on the books that closely mirrored each proposal, but the former Attorney General and head of DSHS refused to do their jobs and enforce these laws. With the appointment of the new DSHS Secretary, Robin Arnold-Williams, and with Attorney General Rob McKenna's support, changes will be made in how existing laws are enforced to protect legally operating daycare operators and the taxpayers against fraud and wasteful spending.

## Stamping out arson

Due to a series of fires in Kittitas and Yakima counties last year, the Kittitas County Sheriff's Office approached Rep. Holmquist for an extra tool to use when initiating an investigation of arson-related fires in Washington.

In response, Rep. Holmquist prime-sponsored House Bill 1746, a measure that would require convicted arson offenders to register with the county sheriff.

This legislation would affect nearly 2,000 convicted arsonists in Washington. The registry would serve as a tool for local law enforcement to use throughout an arson investigation by giving them a starting place – the knowledge of which convicted arsonists live in the area. This would be useful as the State Fire Marshal's Office places convicted arsonists' rate of reoffense as high as 64 percent. Rep. Holmquist will continue to work for this next session.



## Life-saving bill becomes law

Most people are unaware that nearly 700,000 fire sprinklers installed in buildings and homes in Washington are defective. House Bill 1945, prime-sponsored by Rep. Holmquist, initiates a statewide campaign to inform and assist people in replacing defective sprinklers for free. Working with the State Fire Marshal's Office, this measure uses current dollars and does not require additional employees. Signed into law, this bill will save lives and prevent needless tragedies.



## Drought relief efforts demonstrate need for long-term water solutions

More than 28 years ago, Gov. Dixy Lee Ray said Washington needs water storage to prepare for the future. Today is the future and our water storage capabilities remain insufficient.

There are things, like the rain, that are simply beyond the control of the Legislature and the governor. And there are things, like managing the state's water supply, which should be well within our control.

Water availability for agriculture and municipal uses is a serious ongoing issue for those of us in Eastern Washington. Farmers and other landowners often struggle with periodic shortages of water to keep their crops – and livelihoods – viable for another year. The prospect of a drought, perhaps the worst in recent history, once again exposes the weaknesses in our state's complex water management policies.

In a drought, there is the potential for water rights to be interrupted, which means costly crop damage, minimal power generation, and other detrimental impacts to communities facing water shortages. With the Cascade mountain

snow pack the lightest since 1977, a drought could adversely impact both sides of the state.

We took action during the session to minimize potential effects of the impending drought. More than \$8 million was approved for public entities to alleviate drought conditions that may affect public health and safety, including aiding public drinking-water suppliers, agricultural activities, fire protection, and fish and wildlife survival.”

Included within that appropriation is:

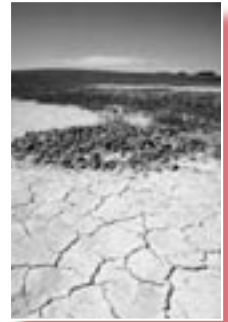
- \$3.35 million for public agricultural water supplies, including up to \$1.5 million to the Roza Irrigation District in the Yakima Basin.
- \$2.35 million for public facilities and utilities that supply drinking water.
- \$1 million for fish and wildlife resources.
- \$1.5 million to lease and purchase water rights to offset the effects of emergency wells and water-right transfers in the Yakima Basin. Most of the money would go to the Roza Irrigation District.

Rep. Holmquist also co-sponsored HB 2166, which creates a joint legislative committee on water supply to respond to drought conditions. The measure, which was signed into law, positions the state to be ready for this drought and any future droughts. **Rep. Holmquist was recently appointed to serve on this committee.** It's our intent to work for several specific drought relief measures from this effort, including:

- Ensuring water users have access to drought wells that have been permitted for temporary water rights
  - Creating a process for water transfers from one location to another and from one user to another to ensure effective use of water in drought emergencies
  - Making funds available to facilitate transfers and drought mitigation (such as those listed above)
  - Ensuring fire fighters have access to the nearest available water sources and ensuring forest practices on state forest lands are implemented to minimize fuel loads to curb the risks of wildfires.
- Sen. Mulliken also co-sponsored two bills to ease the water rights process during droughts. These bills would have:
- Allowed farmers to retrofit their domestic wells to provide water for their agricultural operations; and
  - Protected water rights holders who agree to transfer water to contribute to drought shortfalls from losing water rights under the state's "use-it-or-lose-it policy."

Unfortunately, these two bills did not pass.

Although these are short-term solutions, ultimately, we must get back to our long-term goal of developing additional water storage facilities which will meet the needs of agriculture, fire protection and municipal water demands.



*Sen. Joyce Mulliken makes a point about a bill during Senate floor debate.*

## District offices open

We work for you throughout the year, not just when the Legislature is in session. So we encourage you to continue communicating with us throughout the year as well. If you have a question, comment, idea or concern about state government, or if you are having difficulties dealing with a state agency, please contact our offices.

For your convenience, we have re-opened our district offices in Ephrata and Moses Lake. Please stop by and visit.

### Sen. Joyce Mulliken's District Office

Ephrata Ports Office Building  
P.O. Box 262  
Ephrata, WA 98823  
Phone: (509) 754-6000

#### **Office Hours:**

Monday -Thursday, 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., through Labor Day weekend.  
Monday -Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. after Labor Day weekend.

### District Office Day

#### **Kittitas County**

Second Thursday of each month (except for August and September to allow for county fairs), 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Commissioner's Conference Room  
205 W. 5th Ave., Suite 108  
Ellensburg, WA

### Rep. Janéa Holmquist's District Office

408 West 4th (Central Bonded Collectors Bldg.)  
Moses Lake, WA 98837  
Phone: (509) 766-6585 • Fax: (509) 766-6586

#### **Office Hours:**

Monday - Thursday, 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.

### District Office Day

#### **Kittitas County**

First Thursday of each month, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Commissioners' Conference Room  
205 W. 5th Ave., Suite 108 • Ellensburg, WA

#### **Yakima County**

First Wednesday of each month, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Moxee City Hall  
225 W. Seattle • Moxee, WA

Rep. Holmquist is available to speak to your civic or community group about the 2005 legislative session. Please call her office to check her availability .

**Sen. Joyce Mulliken • Rep. Janéa Holmquist**  
**13th Legislative District**

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